



# THE BAY CITY TIMES

## People's forum

Thursday, November 17, 2005

### Adoption Day

Voice: Karen A. Tighe, Bay County Probate and Family Court judge, Bay City

On Tuesday, Michigan will observe its third annual Adoption Day. Here in Bay County, we will be finalizing the adoptions of 10 children, many of them siblings, into five adoptive homes. This courtroom event, the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, is our way of "Giving Thanks for Families." During the ceremonies, the adoptees receive Beanie Babies and the families take pictures and speak for the record.

Each child who is old enough signs my autograph book, marking the first occasion on which they use their new name. It is one of the few happy events to take place in a courtroom, and we enjoy creating a memorable day for the children and their new families.

At any given time there are about 19,000 children in foster care in Michigan, the vast majority of whom are victims of abuse and neglect. Some will return to their biological families; others will be adopted. But far too many remain in the foster care system until they literally "age out" at 18 or 19. Imagine these young people trying to live independently - and confronting such issues as finances, housing, and education - all alone, with no adult support or guidance. Not surprisingly, many of these youngsters are at risk for poverty, homelessness, unemployment and other misfortunes.

There is no substitute for a loving and stable family. Bay County is a wonderfully abundant community full of caring people. If there is room in your heart and home, perhaps you can foster a child's heartache to joy. Further information can be obtained through the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org), or by calling 800-589-6273.

### Redeeming Scrooge

Voice: Joel V. Smith, Oscoda

I went to see the play "The Gospel According to Scrooge" in East Tawas. The most poignant scene of all was that of an elderly Ebenezer - with failing health and facing a rapid dwindling of his days - clinging to his own tombstone, and wailing, "Oh Lord ... if you'll have me, I shan't let anything come between us again! Not my pain - not my fear - not even my money."

We all know the outcome. Even with the silent Christian twist, we see Scrooge awakened on Christmas morning; determined to spend whatever number of hours he has in service to his God. He will not let one more mortal on his path be put aside. Scrooge has found the true source of human joy, and it certainly is not too late for him.

The fact is, even in this increasingly ugly and violent world, there is still plenty of delight to be established. Not a lot is required: Mostly the strength is planted by uplifting the depressed person in some way.

As a popular song stated a few years ago, we're "...only dancing on this earth for a short time." But the opportunities to provide durability for a falling man are almost endless.

The play will run in early December again this year. I'll be seeing it once more. In fact, I'll probably assist in producing it. Audiences loved it last year - and the theme never wears out.

Accept others

Voice: Candi Miller, Bay City

In response to Sister Darlene Oard (People's Forum, Nov. 7):

So many of our children (God's children) are committing suicide every day because society is sending the message that they are (as you stated) "perverted." I love my husband, and have for almost 16 years. I could not imagine loving or being attracted to a woman. Could you?

If not, then why is it so hard for people to understand that when a man is attracted to a man, he could not imagine his life with a woman? It's not a choice on my part. How could it be a choice on his part? If a person lives a good, moral life, doing for others and not harming anyone in his/her life, why should they go to hell?

Do we all live by the Bible word for word? Obviously not, because doesn't it always say love thy neighbor? As good Christian people, we accept others for who they are and teach our children the same.

Go back into their closets and pray? Sure - pray for the souls of those who preach hate.

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